IACH. As fair, and as good, (a kind of hand-in-hand comparison,) had been something too fair,, and too good, for any lady in Britany. If she went before others I have seen, as that diamond of yours out-lustres many 1 have beheld, I could not but believe she excelled many: but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady [7]«

Cassio!" says Bianca in Othello; and Lucio, in Measure for Measure, informs Isabella that her brother Claudio ** hath got his *friend* [Julietta] with child." *Friend,* in short, is one of those " fond adoptions Christendoms that blinking Cupid gossips,"" many of which are catalogued by Helen in AlPs Well That Ends Well, and *friend* is one of the number :

" A mother, and a mistress, and
^*friend,* [f<] A phoenix, captain, and
an enemy."

This word, though with some degradation, is still current among the harlotry of London, who, (like Macheath's doxies,) as often as they have occasion to talk about their absent *keepers,* invariably call them their *friends.* In this sense the word is also used by lago, in Othello, Act IV. Sc. I.:

" Or to be naked with *her friend* abed,"

Posthumus means to bestow the most exalted praise on Imogen* a praise the more valuable as it was the result of reason, not of amorous dotage. I make my avowal, says he, in the character of her adorer, not of her possessor.:—I speak of her as a being I reverence, not as a beauty whom I enjoy.—-I rather profess to describe her with the devotion of a worshipper, than the raptures of a lover. This sense of the word also appears to be confirmed by a subsequent remark of lachimo :

" You are ^*friend,* and therein the wiser."

i. e. you are a *lover,* and therefore show your wisdom in opposing all experiments that may bring your lady's chastity into question.

STEEVENS.

, *1* If she went before others I have seen, as that diamond of yours out-lustres many I have beheld,, I could not BUT believe she excelled many: but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady.] The old copy reads—" I could *not believe* she excell'd many; " but it is on all hands allowed that the reasoning of lachimo, as it stands there, is inconclusive. - On this account, Dr. Warburton reads, omitting the word—not, *[6]1 could believe she excelled many/'

Mr. Heath proposes to read, " I could *but* believe," &c, Mr. Malone, whom I have followed, exhibits the passage as it appears in the present text.